Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Julian Marvin Swain

Overview of the Collection

Repository: The HistoryMakers® 1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator: Swain, Julian
Title: The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Julian Marvin Swain,
Dates: March 23, 2005
Bulk Dates: 2005
Physical Description: 6 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:47:02).
Abstract: Choreographer and dancer Julian Marvin Swain (1924 - 2011) formed the Co-Op Trio, which performed with Count Basie and Duke Ellington. Swain was also the founder of the Julian Swain Inner City Dance Theatre and Julian Swain and Friends, and was a dance panelist for the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs. Swain was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 23, 2005, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification: A2005_075
Language: The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Dancer, choreographer, and entertainer Julian Marvin Swain was born on December 18, 1924 in Chicago, Illinois. Raised by his mother, Sarah Elizabeth Davis Swain, he attended Stephen A. Douglas Elementary School and Wendell Phillips High School. At Chicago’s Southside Community Arts Center, Swain met artists like Margaret Goss Burroughs and Gordon Parks and took lessons with dancers Lester Goodman, Lucille Ellis, Wilbert Bradley, Sammy Dyer, Tommy Gomez and Jimmy Payne. Swain performed with Carmencita Romero in the
Annual Artists Ball at the Savoy. In 1940, Swain traveled with Romero and danced in Toronto before learning about African dance in New York from Senegal’s Assadata Dafora.

Returning to Chicago, Swain worked as one of choreographer Lon Fontaine’s “Beige Beaus” at the Beige Room. Swain then became choreographer and lead dancer at Chicago’s Club DeLisa, but gained his greatest notoriety as a member of the Co-Op Trio with Peter Green and Ann Henry. The Co-Ops performed with top acts like Count Basie and in venues like Larry Steele’s Club Harlem in Atlantic City, New Jersey and Arthur Bragg’s Idlewild Review in Michigan. In the 1960s, Swain continued to perform ballet and modern and ethnic dance and in 1971, he formed the Julian Swain Inner City Dance Theatre at Malcolm X College.

As a singer and actor Swain has performed in various musical reviews and revivals including Okoro Harold Johnson’s Don’t Get Around Much Anymore, Randall Johnson’s Le Stardust Revue, A Tribute to Duke Ellington, Chuck Hoenes’ Best of the Hit Paraders and Sugar. Featured in the The Blues Brothers, Swain also performed in Carlos Santana and Michelle Branch’s “The Game of Love” video. A dance panelist for the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs, Swain also participates in Dance Africa. A recipient of the Black Theatre Alliance Award, Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley honored Swain with the 2004 Chicago Senior Citizen Award.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Julian Marvin Swain was conducted by Larry Crowe on March 23, 2005, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 6 Betacame SP videocassettes. Choreographer and dancer Julian Marvin Swain (1924 - 2011) formed the Co-Op Trio, which performed with Count Basie and Duke Ellington. Swain was also the founder of the Julian Swain Inner City Dance Theatre and Julian Swain and Friends, and was a dance panelist for the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs.

Restrictions

Restrictions on Access

Restrictions may be applied on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of The HistoryMakers®.
Restrictions on Use

All use of materials and use credits must be pre-approved by The HistoryMakers®. Appropriate credit must be given. Copyright is held by The HistoryMakers®.

Related Material

Information about the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview, as well as correspondence with the interview subject is stored electronically both on The HistoryMakers® server and in two databases maintained by The HistoryMakers®, though this information is not included in this finding aid.

Controlled Access Terms

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

Persons:

Swain, Julian
Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)
Griffin, Jeff (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Swain, Julian--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)
The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

**Occupations:**

- Dancer
- Choreographer

**HistoryMakers® Category:**

- ArtMakers

**Administrative Information**

**Custodial History**

Interview footage was recorded by The HistoryMakers®. All rights to the interview have been transferred to The HistoryMakers® by the interview subject through a signed interview release form. Signed interview release forms have been deposited with Jenner & Block, LLP, Chicago.

**Preferred Citation**


**Processing Information**

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 2/5/2020 by The HistoryMakers® staff. The finding aid was created adhering to the following standards: DACS, AACR2, and the Oral History Cataloging Manual (Matters 1995).

**Other Finding Aid**
A Microsoft Access contact database and a FileMaker Pro tracking database, both maintained by The HistoryMakers®, keep track of the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Original Interview Footage

- Video Oral History Interview with Julian Marvin Swain, Section A2005_075_001_001, TRT: 0:28:25 2005/03/23
- Video Oral History Interview with Julian Marvin Swain, Section A2005_075_001_002, TRT: 0:29:37 2005/03/23
- Video Oral History Interview with Julian Marvin Swain, Section A2005_075_001_003, TRT: 0:29:07 2005/03/23
- Video Oral History Interview with Julian Marvin Swain, Section A2005_075_001_004, TRT: 0:28:51 2005/03/23
- Video Oral History Interview with Julian Marvin Swain, Section A2005_075_001_005, TRT: 0:29:50 2005/03/23
- Video Oral History Interview with Julian Marvin Swain, Section A2005_075_001_006, TRT: 0:21:12 2005/03/23